

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of generating a network zone plan, comprising:
  - collecting device connectivity information for devices in a network;
  - performing an analysis on the collected information to infer relationships between the devices;
  - identifying policies to be utilized in generating a zone plan of the network; and
  - generating the zone plan based on a combination of the analysis performed and the identified zoning policies.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the network is a storage area network (SAN).
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the zone plan dictates which of the devices are visible to each other.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein the devices include host systems to access data and storage subsystems which are providers of data.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein the zone plan is a network-layer access control mechanism which dictates which storage subsystems are visible to which hosts.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprises presenting the zone plan for approval, wherein the zone plan is not implemented until approval is received.
7. A computer program product having instruction codes for providing autonomic zoning in a storage area network, comprising:
  - a first set of instruction codes for collecting device connectivity information for devices in a network;
  - a second set of instruction codes for performing an analysis on the collected information to infer relationships between the devices;
  - a third set of instruction codes for identifying policies to be utilized in generating a zone plan of the network; and
  - a fourth set of instruction codes for generating the zone plan based on a combination of the analysis performed and the identified zoning policies.
8. The computer program product of claim 7 wherein the network is a storage area network (SAN).
9. The computer program product of claim 7 wherein the zone plan dictates which of the devices are visible to each other.
10. The computer program product of claim 9 wherein the devices include host systems to access data and storage subsystems which are providers of data.

11. The computer program product of claim 10 wherein the zone plan is a network-layer access control mechanism which dictates which storage subsystems are visible to which hosts.
12. The computer program product of claim 7 further comprises presenting the zone plan for approval, wherein the zone plan is not implemented until approval is received.
13. A system to provide autonomic zoning in a network, comprising:
  - an autonomic zoning management module to autonomically generate zoning plans pertaining to a network, according to a combination of each device in the network's connectivity information and user generated policies.